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Elizabeth Burmaster, State Superintendent

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CONTACT: Joseph Donovan, Communications Officer, (608) 266-3559

**Krejcarek, Parks receive Presidential Awards for Excellence
in Mathematics and Science Teaching**

MADISON—Probing questions that require students to think about their own learning are teaching skills that link Dana Krejcarek and Michelle Parks, Wisconsin's 2005 recipients of Presidential Awards for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching.

Krejcarek of Fond du Lac, a science and chemistry teacher from the Kohler School District, and Parks of Altoona, an eighth-grade teacher and mathematics department chair for Northstar Middle School in Eau Claire, will travel to Washington, D.C., May 1-6 for Recognition Week activities. Events will include professional development sessions and honors at a variety of ceremonies during Recognition Week. In addition, Presidential Teaching Award recipients receive \$10,000 from the National Science Foundation.

"These educators bring passion to their teaching," said State Superintendent Elizabeth Burmaster. "Their classrooms are laboratories of learning where students gain a deep understanding through challenging lessons that encourage individual discovery."

As nominees for the Presidential Teaching Awards program, Krejcarek and Parks submitted a videotaped lesson, written responses to questions about their instructional practice, sample student work, and a resume of their background and experience. A national committee reporting to the White House and the National Science Foundation judged state-level finalists and selected one teacher of mathematics and one of science to receive the Presidential Teaching Awards.

In her featured lesson, Krejcarek demonstrated her students' exploration of chemical solutions and the unique properties of water. Krejcarek works with student groups, asking them probing questions that they must answer through experimentation. Krejcarek has been a past-president of the state science teacher's association and co-director of the Science World program.

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Parks had her students learn the relationship between diameter and circumference by measuring bubbles during her featured lesson. Students discovered how algebra is used in tables, graphs, and equations, as well as for making generalizations. “Experiencing the mathematics is what causes a deeper understanding for all students,” Parks said. Parks is involved with the Wisconsin Mathematics Council, writes for the *Wisconsin Teacher of Mathematics* quarterly journal, is a conference presenter on the Connected Mathematics Project, and developed and co-presents the course, “Becoming a Reflective Practitioner,” at St. Mary’s University of Minnesota. She also is trained as a facilitator for the National Science Foundation Project, “Dynamic Classroom Assessment.”

Krejcarek and Parks were among six state finalists for Presidential Teaching Awards for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching from Wisconsin selected last summer. The others are Wanda Bussey, Rufus King High School in Milwaukee, and Margaret Hartwig, Marshfield High School, for mathematics; and Nancy AufderHeide of Oshkosh, Einstein Middle School in Appleton, and Sue Whitsett of Oshkosh, Fond du Lac High School, for science.

Established by Congress in 1983, the annual Presidential Teaching Awards program identifies outstanding mathematics and science teachers in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, the U.S. Territories, and the U.S. Department of Defense Schools. This year’s recipients—chosen by a panel of leading mathematicians, scientists, and educators in conjunction with the White House—are middle and high school teachers in grades 7-12.

Applications for the 2006 awards program, which will recognize kindergarten through sixth-grade teachers, are due May 1. Nominations for 2007 awards, recognizing middle and high school teachers can be made by anyone who knows an excellent mathematics or science teacher. Nomination forms and additional program information can be found on the Presidential Awards for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching website at < <http://www.paemst.org/> >.

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